



# Pathways to Peace:

## A Spiritual Journey Into a World Beyond Religious Conflict

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## Overview:

### The Historical Context

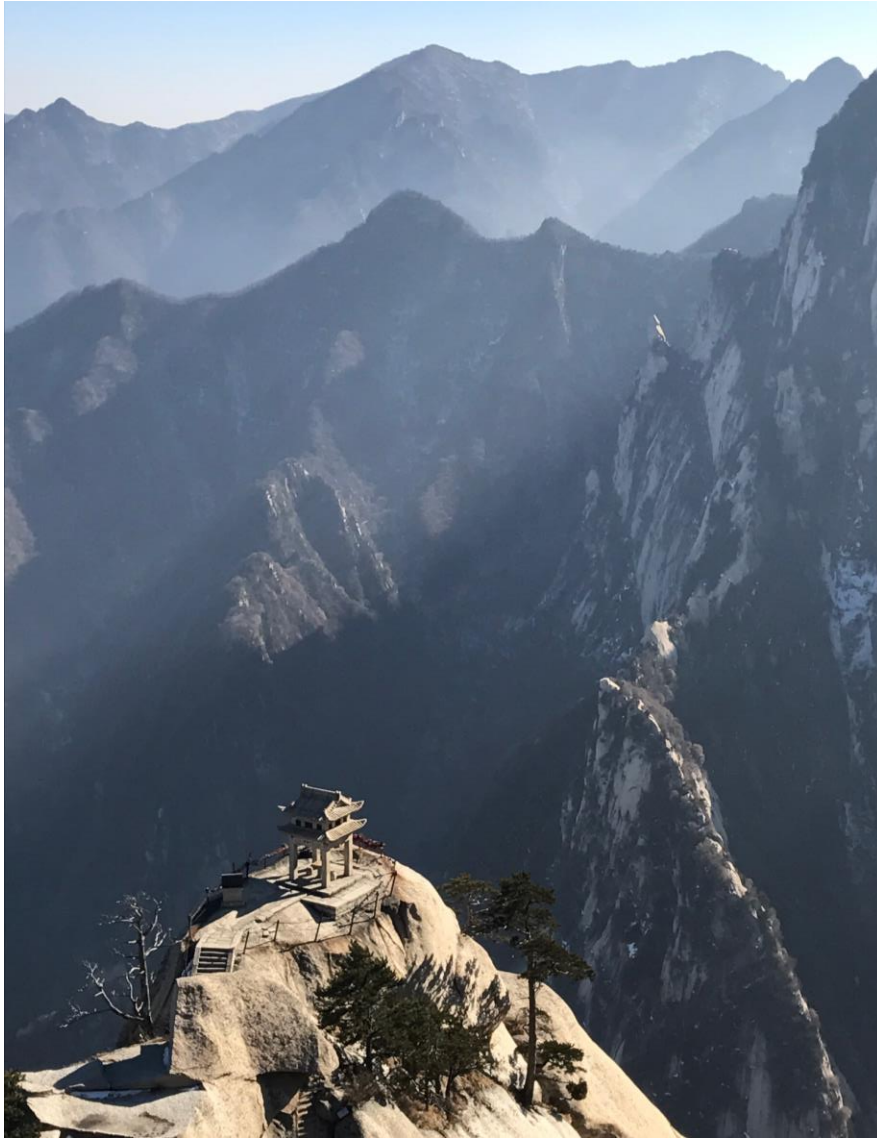
*If we are to understand the world we live in, and provide a possible paradigm for dialogue and tolerance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must understand and be able to speak to the religious traditions which impact so many of our world events.*





## Proposed Objectives:

- To research the causes of religious conflict and discover paradigms for building peace.
- To create strategies that might be employed to bring religious tolerance and understanding in the midst of our diversity.
- To bring new awareness and understanding to our own religiously diverse community at Lynn University.



## Program Plan:

- To spend six months (January – July 2017) in the key religious epicenters of our world (including the Far East, the Middle East, Eastern/Western Europe, and India).
- In order to research the question of what are the causes of religious conflict in our world and discover new paradigms for building peace.





# The Logistics:

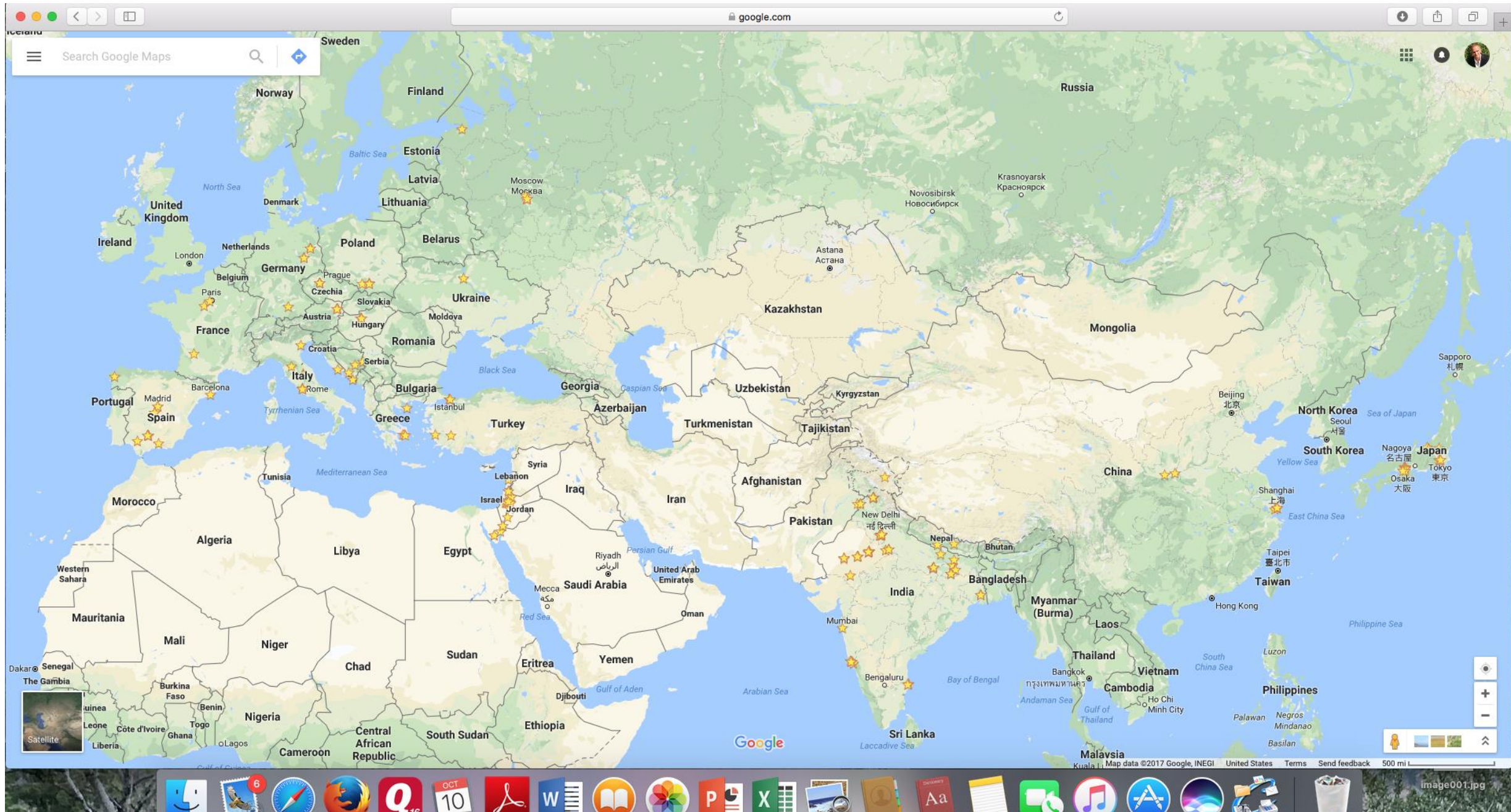
## A Journey of Transformation

- Nearly 100K by plane, train, boat, bus, car, tuk-tuk, rickshaw, bicycle, camel, elephant and walking.
- Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Daoism, Confucianism, Shinto, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Druze, and Baha'i

Who are you?









Then came India...





# Video Vignette



## The Common Core: People

People are, in essence, the same the world over -- even in their spectacularly unique expressions of life.





## The Common Core: Religion

Religion, at its core, is a universal expression of our human desire for meaning, purpose, and hope -- even in its diverse array of imagining the world and beyond.



## The Causes of Conflict:

When we are violent in small areas (food preparation, treatment of animals) we can easily become violent in larger areas (people – human interaction).





## The Causes of Conflict:

- We tend to define ourselves as-over-against what we are not (i.e. different from our neighbors/other religions) rather than what we are and what we might share with those who are different from us.
- This DUALISM inevitably leads to violence.



## The Causes of Conflict:

1. Practicing religion as a competitive enterprise
2. The coopting of religion by those with a dark agenda (fundamentalists/terrorists) Religion used to instill fear and control (history is rife with examples)
3. Exclusivity over Inclusivity
4. Particularity over Universality
5. Tribal at the expense of what is Global





# The Causes of Conflict:

**When the Tribal feels threatened by the Global.**

- Loss of individual identity
- Subsumed by the greater good
- Particular overpowered by the universal



## Pathways to Peace:

The “3 Selves” necessary for a healthy religion (otherwise it borders on being a cult and open to abusive practices):

- Self-Aware
- Self-Critiquing
- Self-Reforming





## Pathways to Peace:

Food breaks down walls when shared and creates relationships when paired with dialogue.



## Pathways to Peace:

If we dared to eat together, sleep together, live life together – as this requires trust and breaks-down walls of suspicion – then we would have peace.





## Pathways to Peace:

- If we dared to Dialogue with an open mind; not in order to decide if someone is right or wrong, but to understand them (with respect and empathy)!
- We all have something in common with one another – our common humanity!





# Pathways to Peace:

## Dare to Pray together!

- We will have peace when we start to see each other not as "other" but as "brother."
- Example of Blue Mosque



## Pathways to Peace:

- Pathways to Peace begins with a journey of inner peace.
- We cannot hope to achieve a global peace if we do not first achieve peace with ourselves (our inner self).
- We are more alike than unlike.





## Pathways to Peace:

The Sacred in the Profane, the pathway to peace in the stuff of life!



